

PROPOSAL EVALUATION

Integrated Regional Water Management Implementation Proposition 50, Chapter 8 IRWM Implementation Step 1

PIN: 6584
APPLICANT NAME: County of Humboldt
PROJECT TITLE: North Coast Integrated Regional Water Management Plan, Phase I
FUNDS REQUESTED: \$ 50,000,000
COST MATCH: \$150,031,424
TOTAL PROJECT COST: \$200,031,424

DESCRIPTION: The NCIRWMP provides a regional framework for planning and implementation of projects that enhance beneficial uses of water, contribute to salmonid recovery, and support intra-regional cooperation. It is an adaptive process that has identified water management needs in the North Coast and prioritized projects for implementation. The process of developing, implementing, and refining the NCIRWMP has been and will continue to be one of inclusion. Workshops have been conducted throughout the region and a website was developed to provide information and funding opportunities to the public. Much of the region is classified as a disadvantaged community and several plan participants are representatives from these communities. Implementation of the NCIRWMP will have multiple benefits to the regional environment, including enhancements to water quality, water supply, and environmental equity.

Question: Consistency with Minimum IRWM Standards - This evaluation will focus on whether the applicant has demonstrated that the IRWM Plan meets the minimum standards.

Pass

Question: Consistency with IRWM Standards - Adopted IRWM Plan and Proof of Formal Adoption. Weighting factor is 1. 3

The applicant states in Attachment 4 that the IRWMP has been adopted by the Counties of Sonoma, Humboldt, Siskiyou, Modoc, and Del Norte and the Sonoma County Water Agency. Mendocino and Trinity Counties are expected to adopt the IRWMP on July 19, 2005 and prior to January 1, 2007, respectively. The resolutions provided in Attachment 3 are resolutions authorizing Humboldt County to apply to the IRWM program. The resolutions do not specifically adopt the IRWMP, except for the resolution from Sonoma County. Therefore, only one of the participating entities has provided proof of formal adoption of the IRWMP.

Question: Consistency with IRWM Standards - Description of Region. Weighting factor is 1. 5

The application includes maps and a narrative description of the region. Maps include internal boundaries, major water related infrastructure, and land use divisions of the region. The application discusses water quality and quantity and current and future water needs. The application includes sufficient information to determine why the region is appropriate for water management. The ecological processes and environmental resources, including sensitive habitats, are included as well as a discussion of the social, cultural, and economic characteristics of the region.

Question: Consistency with IRWM Standards - Objectives. Weighting factor is 1. 5

The applicant identifies their regional objectives and provides a description of how they were determined. The objectives are well defined and appear very appropriate for the region. The objectives appear to be interrelated and appropriate for the region. They discuss the structure of the policy review panel and the TACs that determined the objectives.

Question: Consistency with IRWM Standards - Water Management Strategies and Integration. Weighting factor is 1. 5

The applicant describes the water management strategies that were considered to meet the objectives of the IRWMP. The IRWMP describes how the applicable strategies will work together to provide reliable water supply, protect or improve water quality, and achieve the other objectives. The IRWMP describes the added benefits of integration of multiple water management strategies. The applicant states that conjunctive use, desalination, imported water, and water transfer strategies are not applicable to this region.

Question: Consistency with IRWM Standards - Priorities and Schedule. Weighting factor is 1. 5

Short-term priorities are reflected by the projects currently being proposed. Long-term priorities are: implementing the remainder of the projects on their list of 123 projects, refining the IRWMP, and continued networking and outreach. An evaluation and update of the IRWMP and projects is proposed. There is a framework for education, negotiation, decision making, and adaptive management.

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Question: Consistency with IRWM Standards - Implementation. Weighting factor is 1.

4

The applicant includes projects that are mostly based on feasibility studies and/or past monitoring efforts that will implement the IRWMP. The IRWMP includes a time line for short-term projects. The projects' status is indirectly addressed in the IRWMP schedule and could be more directly discussed. A discussion regarding project linkage could not be identified in Attachment 3, but Attachment 5 states that physical connectivity of projects is not needed to achieve the objectives of the IRWMP. Economic feasibility may be in question to implement all the projects listed in the IRWMP. The institutional structure for ensuring IRWMP implementation is discussed and will be overseen by a Policy Review Panel and Technical Peer Review Committee.

Question: Consistency with IRWM Standards - Impacts and Regional Benefits. Weighting factor is 1.

5

The applicant states that unintended negative environmental impacts can occur, but is not probable because all projects will comply with CEQA. Potential development, if not well managed, could have negative impacts. The IRWMP describes several negative impacts if the projects are not implemented. The applicant states several reasons why there is an advantage of regional planning. The applicant identifies two interregional benefits and states that no interregional impacts will occur. The IRWMP thoroughly describes benefits and impacts to DACs. In addition, the applicant evaluates the impacts and benefits to air quality, energy provision capabilities, and wildlife.

Question: Consistency with IRWM Standards - Technical Analysis and Plan Performance. Weighting factor is 1.

4

The applicant states that the selection of water management strategies is based on data from stakeholders, counties, and agencies in the form of local plans, watershed assessments, strategic plans, and other plans and data to reflect current conditions, needs, and conflicts. All strategies listed in the Guidelines were considered. Data gaps are noted. However, this information is not specific and states that most watersheds, rivers, and streams have not been adequately assessed. Methods to evaluate IRWMP performance are described with numerous performance measures listed. Also, project evaluation and monitoring is included in the individual project descriptions.

Question: Consistency with IRWM Standards - Data Management. Weighting factor is 1.

5

Monitoring for each project can be found in Section 7 of the IRWMP. Attachment 5 states that data will be collected as required by regulatory requirements and guidelines. The applicant states that the data will be compliant with SWAMP and GAMA, and will be submitted to these databases. They will be using a GIS database. Data will be disseminated via a website to all web users and to state agencies. Hardcopies will be provided to interested parties without web access. A discussion of the state of other existing monitoring efforts is found in Section 9 of the IRWMP.

Question: Consistency with IRWM Standards - Financing. Weighting factor is 1.

4

The applicant identifies beneficiaries for each project in the IRWMP. Appendix M identifies potential funding/financing for each project. Attachment 5 addresses three cases of ongoing support and financing for O&M of implemented projects, although no discussion is provided in the IRWMP.

Question: Consistency with IRWM Standards - Relation to Local Planning & Sustainability. Weighting factor is 1.

3

The applicant includes federal, State, and local planning and environmental recovery documents. However, a discussion regarding how they relate to the IRWMP other than a brief narrative stating that the IRWMP will synchronize local and statewide planning efforts could not be found. While the IRWMP suggests coordination with local planners, it could have taken a more direct approach describing the nexus between local planning and the IRWMP. A discussion regarding local planning and IRWMP strategies could not be found.

Question: Consistency with IRWM Standards - Stakeholder Involvement & Coordination. Weighting factor is 1.

4

The IRWMP describes the process used for inclusion of stakeholders in development of the plan and identifies general stakeholder types. The IRWMP does not document public outreach specific to individual stakeholder groups. The applicant describes five processes that will be used to facilitate stakeholder involvement and communication during IRWMP implementation. The applicant states that over 70 agencies signed an MOU. Environmental justice concerns are only identified at a conceptual level. The applicant should list or give a brief description of some of the conceptual ideas. They state that representatives from DACs are primary leaders designated by the Regional Water Management Group. The applicant states that State and federal agencies are expected to be involved in strategies, actions, and projects, although no discussion is provided in the IRWMP.

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Question: Funding Match. This evaluation will focus on whether the applicant has demonstrated the ability to meet the minimum funding match or has requested a waiver or reduction in the funding match.

Pass

Question: Description of Proposal. Weighting factor is 3.

15

There is a good description of the region with goals and objectives of the IRWMP. Ten water management elements are included. Individual projects are described with goals and objectives that are consistent with the IRWMP objectives. The applicant presents a matrix of goals and objectives of the IRWMP and the projects. There is also a list of potential listed species and a list of beneficial uses. Environmental compliance requirements for each project are contained in Attachment 13. Water quality projects meet the criteria, and the scientific basis is described in each project description. Other grant-funded projects will be used as a match and as context for projects in the proposal. The metrics for water quality and water supply increases are in the description of each project. Numerous metrics are listed in the proposal for restoration, planning, watershed protection, water supply, and recycling.

Question: Project Prioritization. Weighting factor is 2.

10

The applicant states that the projects are prioritized by the Policy Review Panel and the Technical Peer Review Committee using criteria based on IRWM requirements. Twenty-three projects are prioritized out of a total of 123. This list reflects the goals and objectives of the IRWMP e.g., salmonid habitat, drinking water, water supply, TMDLs, and environmental justice.

Question: Cost Estimate. Weighting factor is 1.

5

The application contains a cost estimate for each project in the proposal. Cost estimates include land costs, planning and design costs, construction costs, and funding match. The total budget shows a direct project administration cost of 4%, a construction administration cost of 6%, and a contingency cost of 5%.

Question: Schedule. Weighting factor is 1.

4

The IRWMP offers a schedule for each proposed project showing items such as design and bid solicitation, permitting, implementation, mitigation and environmental enhancement, maintenance, and monitoring. However, a schedule for the proposal as a whole or for related elements not proposed for funding at this time could not be located.

Question: Need. Weighting factor is 2.

10

The applicant lists water management systems and describes them within four large water supply projects in the IRWMP. The applicant describes regional water management needs in terms of water quality and quantity and in terms of water supply and demand. The applicant describes how each individual project will meet the regional needs by listing the objectives of the IRWMP that are addressed. They further describe the benefits, goals, and potential impacts from not implementing the projects. The applicant discusses the economic and environmental impacts and conditions relative to the need for the proposal for each watershed management area. They discuss the fiscal and economic conditions of the region. A detailed discussion of environmental, socio-economic, and public health impacts that will occur if the projects are not implemented is provided.

Question: Disadvantaged Communities. Weighting factor is 2.

8

The applicant describes several projects that address issues of need in the DACs. Attachment 10 indicates which projects directly benefit DACs. The percentage of DACs is shown in relation to the total population of the region. It is not clear from the proposal if they are requesting a waiver of the funding match requirement. However, calculations for the match reduction are incorrect and the match provided will be far greater than 10% minimum.

Question: Program Preferences. Weighting factor is 1.

5

The proposal includes projects with multiple benefits. The proposal will address water quality and water supply issues in the region. The proposal will reduce pollutants to watercourses which contain endangered and threatened species, Critical Coast Areas, and Areas of Special Biological Significance. The proposal includes projects that will directly benefit DACs in regards to water quality and water supply.

TOTAL SCORE: 109